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A
L E T T E R

FROM

Sir Gregory Gazette,

TO

His Friend in the Country.

Pernicies et tempestas, Barathrumq; Macelli.

HOR.

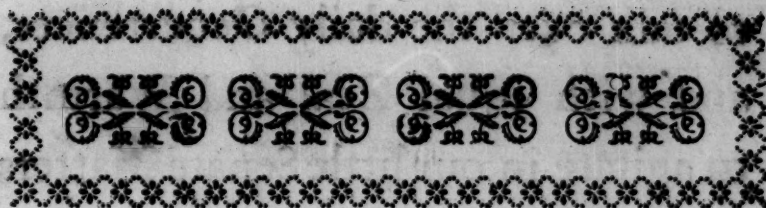
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A

L E T T E R

F R O M

Sir Gregory Gazette,

T O

His Friend in the Country.

S I R,

I *****
Belong to one of those Sets
of Politicians, who having
no Seat in Parliament, nor
any Business to transact out of it,
meet constantly at a Coffee-House

A 2

to

to talk over the daily Occurrences, and with equal Zeal and Warmth to agitate in our little Senate Matters that may seem above our level, but wherein at least we are somewhat concern'd: I know our little *Chiurms* have been honour'd with the Name of Insects; I am not at all offended at it: I will particularize the Species and call 'em Pismires; yet, as nothing was created in vain, I shall endeavour under that Appellation to offer something, which I hope you will not esteem wholly unworthy your Notice.

OUR Conversation began last Night about Mutton-Chops, by which we were insensibly led into the Consideration of the Carcase-Butchers;

Butchers ; and I assure you we were happy to hear that a Stop is likely to be put to that Practice: The Carcase-Butcher appearing to us as a Tax upon the Necessaries of Life, a Toll upon the Market, a Caufer of Artificial Famine, and a Ufurer.

THE Carcase-Butchers are very few in Number, when compared with the Cutting-Brothers of that Trade ; yet they buy up all the Sheep fit for the Knife that come to the Market, or what is pretty near the same, raise the Price so high upon those Sheep that are sold out in small Parcels, that it amounts almost to a Prohibition for any other Butcher to buy them. They then being in Possession of
this

this common Food, agree to set what advanced Price they please upon it; I have never heard of a less Advance than a Shilling *per* Head, which (that we may not exaggerate in any Particular, and to state the Case in the most moderate Light) supposing the Sheep to be worth Twenty Shillings each, is a clear Profit of Five *per Cent.* returnable in a Week or ten Days at farthest; for the Sheep so bought up must be kill'd within that limited Time, else they would go back, fall off of their Flesh, and diminish so much in Value, that the Ingrosser must be ruin'd: and this immense Lucre and Profit not only in its Effect, but in its Consequences inhances so greatly the
the

the Price of Meat ; for the Cutting-Butcher will, as other Trades have done upon a new Tax, take Occasion from thence to make the Consumer pay three Times its Value ; and all this, without any other Manufactory than the mere slaying of the Animal, and without any Benefit to the Publick, contrary to the soundest Principles of commercial Policy, which forbids any lucrative Advantage to be made by private Men, which does not contribute to the Welfare of the Community.

MONOPOLIES are very injurious to Trade ; sometimes they have been unavoidable, but in all Countries it has an odious Sound, and the
Laws

Laws of all States brand it grievously, whenever it presumed to interfere with the Necessaries of Life. It has ever crept in occasionally in the most thriving Republicks; at *Rome* the Oil-Merchants had engross'd the whole Commodity, and strong and coercive Laws were found Necessary to put a Stop to the illicit Practice. The Description given of them by *Plautus* in his *Captivi duo*, seems humourously to describe the present Method of our Carcase-Butchers.

———— *Una Res*

Ommes compactorem agunt, ut in Velabro Olearii.

Velabrum Autore *Varrone*, locus erat Romæ in quo *Olearii* distrahebant oleum. Mos est huic hominum Generi, ut inter se de precio conspirent, quo pluris vendant.

BUT

BUT these Arts occasionally introducing themselves, are a Sign of the Health and vigorous State of the Community. They are luxuriant Branches upon the spreading-Tree, which the Wisdom of Government will occasionally and carefully lop off, in order to make the Trunk of the flourishing Plant increase and thrive the better. Where indeed Merchants have at a great Risque and Charge open'd some new beneficial Branch of Trade, it is but Just to prevent others from intercepting gratis, what is due to the Labour of the first Adventurers: But to suffer a Set of Fellows to form a Line of Circumvallation round the Metropolis, and to permit them like the

Arch-felon *Cacus* to drag backward by the Tail the Fat Beast, or the Drove that is fit for Food into his Den, 'till he has made an arbitrary Gain upon them, is contrary to Justice and to common Sense, and would be in Fact establishing Fore-staling by Authority.

If we take it a little higher, and consider the Carcase Butcher not immediately as he concerns the Community in relation to Food, but as a Member of Society, he ought to be put down : For it is contrary to the best Principles of Government, to encourage those who by ingrossing a Commodity have a sure Profit, in preference to those who depending upon their
Industry,

Industry, purchase, manufacture, and vend in order to obtain a Livelihood, and a Support for themselves and their Families ; the former are ever indolent, lazy, and luxurious ; whilst the latter by their Labour, their Industry, good Management and Sobriety, form the most useful Citizens, and ought ever to be the Object of the Care of the Legislature.

SOME of the Company were at first of Opinion, that they were necessary, as helping to keep the Market at a Level, which indeed was agreed to ; but then that Level was deem'd artificial ; it is forced by Engines, and Wheel within

Wheel; all Combinations must have that Effect, whilst fair and open Trade, like Water in its natural State, will always find the true Level of itself.

ONE of our oldest Club-men being a little hard of hearing, was not convinc'd by our Arguments, but seem'd rather to think it right Carcase Butchers should not be discontinued, because they had subsisted for forty or fifty Years past : The Number being increas'd, did not influence him in the least, because he said if they were good in a small Number, they would be better in a greater, and that you could never have too much of a
good

good thing, and the more the merrier, with various old Proverbs, with which Men in Years are apt to INTERLARDE their Discourse: But at last he was prevailed upon by the following Arguments. That the long standing of an Inconvenience, is no Reason for its Continuance; that Daily Experience shewing the Necessity of abolishing old Laws, or amending them, and the making of new ones, suited to the Times, the Occasions, the Advantages of Trade and Commerce, had brought this Commercial Kingdom, to its present Height, Riches and Influence; that the Argument that a Maxim could not be right unless it was of antient Date,

Date, sent the Discover of the Antipodes to the Inquisition, and the ingenious Mr. Harrison, who is thought to have discovered the Longitude, will be ruined by this Doctrine ; for the Prescription of forty Years pleading in favour of the Carcase Butchers, the Ignorance of the Longitude commencing and subsisting from the beginning of the World to this Day; the Arguments to withhold the Reward from him will grow in Proportion stronger; the Nation will of Course save their Money, and the World will cease to be troubled with any future Attempts towards the Discovery of it.

ONE other Objection arose, which was, that Graziers and others, would not fend up their fat Sheep to Market, because they would want Purchasers if these Ingrossers were abolish'd; but that was soon over-rul'd by what had been said before, viz. That all Sheep so purchased, must be inevitably bought up and consum'd in ten Days, (being in their greatest Perfection for no longer a Time,) whether the Carcase Butcher sold them or not; and the Grazier must at a fixed and certain Time part with his fat Stock, to make room for his lean one, and to pay his Rent: The fortuitous Course of Markets ever has found Consumers for Provisions;

vision; and 'till prevented by clandestine Contrivances and Combinations, Provision for Consumers: But the revising, amending and making new Laws to bar Admission to Extortion, will ever restore that Plenty and Abundance which the Fertility of our Soil, and the Industry of our Inhabitants, shall continue to prepare as the Reward of their Toils, and the comfortable Support of themselves and their Families.

THE Clock striking Eleven the Company broke up, in great Spirits to think of an excellent Dinner provided for them the next Day of the best Mutton, at Three-pence-halfpenny

halfpenny per Pound : One young Gentleman lately come from College, broke out in the following Exclamation in Raptures at the wise Steps that are now on foot ; and to shew his Learning, said, I hope soon to hear of the reducing of the exorbitant Price of Wheat ; the same Spirit that has procured us Meat, will I hope obtain us Bread to eat with it : And then, *Si vincimus omnia nobis tuta com-
meatus abunde, municipia atque
coloniæ patebunt, sin metu cesserimus
eadem illa advorsa fient.* Which in English, I take to be, If our Cause succeeds, we shall have Plenty of good Provision, and the produce of our Fertile Fields will come to
open

open Market: But if thro' cold Indifference, or any other Cause, it should be neglected, then our present Misfortunes will be re-doubled, and our endeavouring to extricate ourselves from our Distresses, will but add new Weight to our Burthens.

F I N I S.

